VEGETARIANISM
AND
THE VEDAS

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Foreword

This work on vedic yajna is a conscientious study of one aspect of the subject : Non-violence in yajna. It is a scientific study supported with evidence from the Vedas and ancient commentaries on the Vedas and interpretive techniques of study. In order to appreciate the author's effort and scholarship and the sanctity of yajna as a creative and collective act of high value, the reader may remember certain things as suggestive guide lines:

In matters of faith : You either have it or you don't. Still there are people who would seek to comfirm their faith either for the sake of rational conviction or to challenge the sceptics. The reader too could be one such person specially in the West.

Veda means knowledge, knowledge of existence as it is and as it works, knowledge from the particle to infinity with the caution, though, that infinity is beyond the known and the knowable : Neti, Neti.

In this world of existence, according to the Vedas, yajna is the highest act of merit and value.

Creation itself is a divine act of yajna. The yajna that we perform as ritual is actual and at the same time a symbolic act of cosmic yajna with threefold purpose of divine warship, social cohesion and creation, environmental replenishment and thankful giving. In such an act of positive purpose there can be no admission of violence. Killing is unthinkable.

In this work this view of yajna is based purely on Vedic studies. In the Veda, yajna is described as 'adhvara' (Rgvada 5, 51, 2) in which violence can never be allowed. There is a positive injunction against killing (Yaj. 12, 32), and it is a sin to kill the cow, in fact any animal (Yaj. 1, 1). In fact animals must be protected (Atharva 19, 48, 5) because as life they are at par with us (yaj.40, 6- 7). How can there be violence then in yajna with such provisions

and injunctions? No book of knowledge can contradict itself.

How then has violence crept into the so called vedic tradition ? It crept in through history and tradition in practice and interpretation. History can be a controlled horse, it can be a wild horse as well free from any controller. It can vitiate tradition and consequently malign pure knowledge. Pure knowledge is self-existent like the theory of Relativity and the theory of Gravitation. But as time passes, local customs and traditions creep into practical observances of Dharma and ritual. Quite often interested parties play with interpretation. There is, for example, a commandment in the Bible : Thou shalt not kill, and yet there is killing on a large scale. The commandment has been even amended in tradition : thou shalt not murder. And yet guns are sold across the country. This is history, and this is historical interpretation.

Vedic knowledge is pure scientific knowledge stated in pure scientific language as swami Dayanand says in the Introduction to his commentary on the Vedas was to promote the translation of the scriptures (i.e., the Bible) into Sanskrit so as to enable his countrymen to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India to the Christian Religion. (Preface p.g) Western translations of the vedas and presentations of vedic rituals would also be inspired by similar motives. Look at the following translation of Rgveta 6, 17, 11 by Ralph T.H. Griffith:

The theory of violence crept into Vedic studies with the western scholars who has a motive. Listen to Monier Williams, author of Sanskrit English Dictionary: The purpose of the Boden grant for Boden Chaisat Oxford and of the Dictionary and Sanskrit studies.

He (Agni) dressed, i.e, cooked, a hundred buffaloes, O Indra, for thee whom all accordant Maruts strengthen. He, Pushan Vishnu, poured forth three great vessels to

him, the juice that cheers, that slaughters vrtra.

Now the translation in the spirit of Swami Dayanand in Nirukta style:

O Indra, ruler of the world, let all vibrant creative forces of nature and humanity join in unison and exalt you, ripening and maturing a hundred mightly gifts of vitality in your service. May Vishnu, all pervasive sustaining power of universal nourishment, ever active, fill the three spaces of heaven, earth and the middle regions with life giving nectar of bliss and exhilaration for this Indra who breaks down the strongholds of darkness and evil.

As in the interpretation of this mantra you have to choose between Indra, the carnivorous agre, and Indra the refulgent ruler, so in the matter of yajna you will have to choose between the blood stained altar and the 'grassy vedi' of fragrant flowers. In an age of science and reason, freedom and democracy, global unity of diversity and telecommunication, it is the reader's choice to know the way you want to know, freely without prejudice : the mantra is :

वर्धान यं विश्वे मरुतः सजोषाः पचच्छतं महिषां इन्द्र तुभ्यम् ।
पूषा विष्शुस्त्रीशा संरासि धावन वृत्रहशां मदिरमंशुमस्मै ।।

vardhan yam vishve marutah sajoshah pacatchatam mahisan Indra tubhyam I

Pusha vishnus trini saransi dhavan vrtrahanam madiram ansum ashmai II

The mischief lies in the verb 'pachat' and the noun 'mahishan' which is the object of pachat. Pachat is from the root 'pach' which in Monier Williams' Dictionary means "to cook, bake, roast, boil", and also 'to ripen, mature, bring to perfection or completion'. 'Mahishan' is the accusative plural of 'mahisha' which means "great, powerful, a great priest, a sage," and also " a buffalo". The choice of the meaning in the translation reflects the faith and motive of the

translator. The reader should decide whether we should honour and rightfully exalt the Vedas, in fact all Scriptures of the world, and the rituals, provisions and injunctions prescribed by them on merit with reason and honesty or play with them.

We may still thank to Professor Griffiths for the has translated ‘madiram’ as juice that cheers’ and not as ‘Whiskey’ !

Dr. Tulsi Ram Sharma
Toronto
Canada

PREFACE

Vedas are the bed rock of Indian culture and civilization. They are the earlier most literature known to the human race. The word Veda means knowledge. When it is applied to scriptures, it signifies books of knowledge. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of the Hindus, the store-house of humane wisdom and a memorable glory which man can never forget till eternity. The Vedas contain eternal spiritual truths and are embodiment of divine knowledge.

Vegetarianism is a concept which is growing in popularity around the world. There are many reasons to subscribe to the philosophy of vegetarianism. Vegetarianism affirms the rights of animals, being also the best example that people care for their environment. Vegetarianism is in many ways a principle of ethics. Humans have no right to eat any animal because they do not give life to them. Vedas, our holy scriptures, are very open about this issue and have not condoned the eating of meat nor have they condoned the sacrifice of animals.

Despite this, recently some Marxist historians all ege that ancient Hindus ate beef, that this is recorded in their sacred scriptures.[1]

The honest question, however, is whether the Vedas offer evidence about cow slaughter and beef-eating, and if not, how the controversy arose in the first place. A few clarifications are in order before we proceed. The word ‘cow’ (gau), for instance, is used throughout the Vedas in diverse senses, and, depending on the context of the verse, could mean the animal cow, waters, sun-rays, learned persons, Vedic verses, or Prithvi (earth as Divine Mother).[2]

The Rig and Sama Veda call the cow “aghnya” and “Aditi”, ie. not to be slanghtered (Rig 1-64-27; 5-83-8; 7-68-9; 1-164-40; 8-69-2; 9-1-9; 9-93-3; 10-6-11; 10-87-16).

They extol the cow as un-killable, inviolable, whose milk purifies the mind and keeps it free from sinss. Verse 10-87-16 prescribes severe punishment for the person who kills a cow. The Atharva Veda recommends beheading (8-3-16) for such a crime; the Rig Veda advocates expulsion from the kingdom (8-101-15).

This book is a humble effort by my father Shri Satyananda Shastri to provide rational proof that Vedas espouse protection of cow and that no where in the book do we have any suggestion that meat eating could be condoned. This book written by Shri Shastri was originally published in 1946, by Virjananda Vedik Institute Gurudutt Bhawan, Lahore, under guidance of Swami Vedananda Tirth. At that time it was titled as 'origin of Animal sacrifice in Vedic Yajna'. Unfortunately the original book is no longer available and I am happy that he has rewritten and revised it for others to understand the vegetarianism concept. This project could not have been completed without the encouragement of Shri Amar Erry. I would also acknowledge the help of Dr. Tulsi Ram who also encouraged and helped in the completion of this project. He painstakingly read the proofs of the book and provided many valuable suggetions to make this book more concise and focused. Infact he graciously agreed to write the forward for this book even adding meaningful insights into this work. I remain eternally greatful for his time and efforts. Without his help this project would not have been completed.

Arunabh Talwar MD
New Hyde Park, NY, USA

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1. D.N. Jha. The Myth of the holy cow
2. Sandhya Jain. Deccan Herald, December 20, 2001

VIRAJANANDA VAIDIKA SAMSTHANA
Jwalapur (Hardwar) Distt. Saharanpur
(U.P.)

Dated 1.1.1952.

It is to certify that Shri Satyananda Shastri M.A., M.O.L., has been working as incharge of printing in the Virjananda Vedic Institute, Gurudatt Bhavan, Lahore from the middle of 1945 upto the end of 1946. During his service he discharged his duties very consciencious1y and the literature printed under his supervision was improved lot. He left the Institute when he bought the Ghauri Art Press, Shah Abdul Mali Road, Lahore.

During his stay in the Institute he also wrote a book 'Origin of Animal Sacrifice in Vedic Yajnas' which, I am sorry, was destroyed along with other manuscripts of the Institute during the disturbances of 1947.

Sd/- Swami Vedananda Tirtha.

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[illegible]

Study Divine Poetry which neither ever dies nor gets out of date.

॥ विरजानन्द वैदिक संस्थान ॥

Virajananda Vaidika Samsthana.

[illegible]

Jwalapur (Hardwar) Dist. Saharanpur (U.P.)

पत्र सं॰ दिनांक 1.1.52

It is to certify that Shri Satyananda Shastri M.A., M.O.L. has been working as incharge of printing in the Virjananda Vedic Institute, Gurudatt Bhawan, Lahore from the middle of 1945 upto the end of 1946. During his service he discharged his duties very conscientiously and the literature printed under his supervision was an improved lot. He left the Institute when he bought the Ghauri Art Press, Shah Abdul Mali Road, Lahore.

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Swami Vedananda Tirtha

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VEGETARIANISM AND THE VEDAS : TRAVESTY OF FACTS

For years, there has been a continuing debate amongst western scholars whether the ancient followers of Vedism were vegetarian or not. A close look at the vedic philosophy provides that the answer is an emphatic 'NO'.

Vedic thought is totally against non-vegetarianism 'Yajurveda' XL-6 says:

> "YASTU SARVAANI BHUUTAANYAAT MANYEVAANUPASYATI
>
> SARVE BHUUTESU CAATMAANAM
>
> TATO NA VICIKITSATI."

"He who sees all beings in the self and the self in all beings, feels no hatred against any creature in the world, for, he realises the similarity of all souls."

How could people who believed in the doctrines of indestructibility, transmigration and oneness (similarity) of souls as the followers of vedism dare to kill animals in 'Yajna'? They might be seeing the souls of their own near and dear ones of bygone days, residing in these living beings. They cannot be expected to indulge in such heinous action for the momentary satisfaction of their taste and hunger.

'Yajurveda' XXVI - 18 says:

> "MITRASYA MAA CKSUSAA SARVAANI
>
> BHUUTAANI SAMII KSANTAAM.
>
> MITRASYA CAKSUSAA SARVAANI BHUUTAANI SAMII KSE
>
> MITRASYA CAKSUAA SAMIIKSAA MAHE"

"May all living beings look upon me as their friend, and may I too treat them as my own friends. Oh God, do arrange things in such a way that all (living beings) behave with one another as true friends".

Can you expect people, who not only believed in as enunciated above but also lived the Vedic ideal of friendliness for all living beings, can act in a manner so as to kill their fellow beings whom they looked upon as their own friends merely for the flimsy and transitory gratification of their hunger?

The doctrine of universal friendliness (love) enunciated above has culminated in absolute non-killing of any other form of living life in those days.

(i) 'Yajurveda' XVI-3 enjoins strict 'ahimsa' of mankind. It says:

"MAA HIMSIIH PURUSAM".

"DO NOT KILL MEN".

(ii) Likewise Yajurveda XIII-47 says:

"IMAM MAA HIMSIIR DVIPAADAM PASUM."

"DO NOT DESTROY THE BIPED LIVING BEINGS".

(iii) Again 'Yajurveda' XII-32 bans animal killing when it says:

"MAA HINSIIST ANVAA PRAJAA."

"Do not destroy the bodies of your people".

(iv) In Yajurveda I-1, The cow is called AGHNYAA [animal which must not be killed].

'Yajurveda' XIII-49 forbids killing of cows for they provide milk to human beings. It says:

GHRTAM DUHAANAM ADITIM JANAAYAAGNEMAA HIMSIIH.

"Do not destroy the cow, giver of milk for mankind and innocent in nature". According to Apte's dictionary 'aditi' means a cow.

(v) Yajurveda XIII-48 says:

IMAM MAA HIMSIIREKASAPHAM PASUM VAAJINAM

"Do not destroy the one hoofed animal, the horse"

(vi) In Rigveda VIII-56-17 cow slaughter has been declared a heinous crime equal to human murder. It says:

AARE GOHAA NRHAA VADH ASTU

"One who kills a cow or murders a man should be awarded capital punishment."

(vii) Also Rg-veda X-87-16 calls those persons *YAATUDHAANA* (demonic persons) who eat raw meat of men or of animals and prays for their beheading. It says:

YAH PAURUSEYENA KRAVISAA SAMBHUMKTE

YO ASVYENA PASUNAA YAATUDHAANAH... AGNE TESAAM

SII RSAANI HARSAA PIVRSCA

"Those demonic people who relish (eat) raw meat of man or of animals like horses, oh God, kill them by beheading"

(viii) In 'Atharva veda' VI - 70 - 1, meat eating has been put at par with vices like drinking and gambling. It is said there:

YATHAA MAAMSAM YATHAA SURAA

YATHAAAKSAA ADHIDEVANE

YATHAA PUMSO VRSANYATA

STRIYAAM NIHANYATE MANAH.

"Surely, human mind gets polluted when it is lust-ridden and when it is set on meat eating, drinking and playing dice".

Thus, there are such clear tenets directly decrying the consumption of meat for human beings and declaring it as a vice equal in intensity to that of other vices like gambling etc. Is it not a travesty of facts to say that ancient followers of vedism were non-vegetarians as has been espoused by many western thinkers?

But there is nothing to be surprised about western thoughts. It is a manifestation of their colonial pride and a relic of the white man's burden.

This pride prompts them to espouse such absurd causes. They feel that like their scriptures, Vedas too, contain historical records in these divine books. They are in the habit of tracing back customs of later periods. Their motive is to somehow lower the sanctity of these divine scriptures so as to bring them to the level of tribal gospel. Their non-vegetarian justification is drawn out of their habits and traditions. They also use modern science to demonstrate that non-vegetarian diet provides more proteins and a better quality food required for bodybuilding. They have a deep faith in the efficacy of life killing sacrificial rituals for gaining divine grace. This very image they probably want to see reflected in the vedas also.

The tradition of performing *''Yajna''* has come handy to them for pursuing these nasty designs. Vedic *''Yajna''* for them is a more ritual for gaining piety, and virtue is just like a simple sacrifice for them. There a bull was sacrificed for offering to God; likewise, an animal must be killed here for offering to the sacred fire. With this thinking in mind, they start translating the Vedas. These thoughts are malafides. Their translations being subjective in nature (not objective), are malicious and untrustworthy.

In Vedic Index, Vol II, (page 145), we find the following assertions:

"The eating of flesh appears as something quite regular in Vedic texts which shows no trace of doctrine of 'ahimsa' or abstaining from injury to animals, for example, the ritual offerings of flesh contemplate that the Gods will eat it, and (again the Brahmas at the offering.")

The above statement asserts: (a) Vedic text shows no traces of doctrine of 'ahimsa'; (b) eating of flesh appears quite regular in vedic texts; and (c) the ritual-offerings of flesh-contemplates that the Gods will eat it and again the Brahmans. All these assertions as shown by the evidence already deduced are incorrect. In fact the third assertion directly concerns the "Vedic Yajna" and shows that western thinkers have no notion of what a Vedic Yajna 'really was. For them, meat offering was an intergral part of a "Vedic Yajna".

It is wrong and totally misleading, 'Vedic Yajna' was a concept of awakened spirit of total development sacrifice for the welfare of all (vide 'Yajurveda' XVIII-29).

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2

CONCEPT OF VEDIC 'YAJNA'

''*Yajna*'' is an essential part of the Vedic way of life. It is a deed of piety, at the root of which lies the positive thought of curbing animosity (animal in man). *DEVAPUUJAA* (regard for the forces of nature and respect for elderly persons), *SAMGATI KARANA* (co-ordination of resources at one's disposal, and *DAANA* (recycling of benefits accuring from *DEVAPUUJAA* and *SAMGATI KARANA* for the welfare of society (are the basics of *"VEDIC 'YAJNA".)* Strict adherence to these principles kills the animal in man, keeps the ego within limits, helps treat man as man, and promotes equality, peace and prosperity.

In the beginning, 'Vedic 'Yajna'' consisted of pouring "ghee" (purified butter) oblations on flaming 'fire' (the divine vigour, primary cause of creation) eulogized in Rg-veda I-1-1 as *'YAJNA'SYA DEVAM* (fashioner of 'Yajna' the cosmic) for purifying the atmosphere. Then came the idea for fumigation of the place where 'Yajna' was being performed by pouring oblations of suitable fragrant herbs, called *SAAMAGRI* in flaming 'fire' of the 'Yajna'. Later on "HAVI", a sweet preparation was added for the elders and also for others to share as "YAJNA-SESA", after the 'Yajna' come to an end. This completed the daily 'Yajna' called "AGNI-HOTRA".

After some time when SRAUTA 'YAJNA' (Community 'Yajna') came into vogue, there started a clamour for doing something more specific to signify the killing of animosity (animal in man). This clamour gave a start to the practice of pouring into the 'sacred fire' the oblations of CARU (rice and beans barley; later MAASHA lentils was also added to these two cereals). The passage of time gave combined "caru" oblations powedred form; again the addition of curd and honey converted it into "caru-paste", (from which in turn were evolved small effigies of animals for being offered as oblations to the sacred Fire of 'Yajna'.) This signified symbolic, but visible, killing of animosity (animal in man). This was the nominal animal sacrifice (killing), an 'ALL AHIMSRA' (devoid of

killing) affair conspicuously performed in vedic 'Yajna' in later period.

In this connnection, "Satapatha Brahmana" (1-2, 3, 6-9) gives a legend, which implies that animal killing in 'Yajna', though hotly discussed in those days, was still not approved by people concerned.

For readers' information, this legend is given below:

In the beginning, the Gods sacrificed (killed) the MAN. The sacrificial essence (medha) went out of him when killed and entered the HORSE. They (the Gods) then sacrificed (killed) the HORSE. The sacrificial essence then went out and entered the COW. They (the Gods),thereupon sacrificed (killed) the Cow. The sacrificial essence then went out of the killed COW and entered the SHEEP. They (the Gods), thereupon sacrificed (killed) the Cow. The sacrificial essence then went out of the killed Cow and entered the SHEEP. They (the gods) then sacrificed Ikilled) the GOAT. The sacrificial essence then went out and entered the EArth. They (the Gods) then dug the Earth in search of the sacrificial essence (medha) that was found hidden in barley and rice. Thus, the offering of barley and rice was considered most effective for oblation to be poured in the Sacred Fire of "Yajna" as the sacrificial essence was still present in them and had not gone out further.

There are passages[1] in Brahmanas and later works, which clearly show that the question of animal killing, for offering to the sacred Fire as symbol of animosity being sacrificed was seriously discussed in those days. But the protagonists of meat eating could not succeed in their game. They poured offerings of CARU (barley, rice and MAASHA) as symbol of the animal in man being killed and offered to the Sacred Fire signifying animosity being sacrificed. Some times oblations of *PRODAADS* (mixture of barley, rice and 'MAASHA' as seeds, again in powdered form and with the addition of curd, honey and 'ghee' making a paste and evolving small effigies of animal therefrom) were also poured into the sacred fire as true symbolic substitutes of animosity being offered, killed and sacrificed

(1) (a) पशवो प्रतिमा पुरोडाशः (तैत्तिरीय ब्राह्मण तथा ताण्डय ब्राह्मण);

(b) पशुः पुरोडाशः (काठक संहिता);

(c) पशवो वैं पुरोडाशः (तैत्तिरीय)

(d) पशुंह वा एषः आलभ्वेत पुरोडाशः (शत० ब्रा०)

(e) स वा एषः पशुरेवालभ्वते यत्पुरोडाशः (ऐतैरय ब्रा०)

(f) तदाहुर्यरेष हविरेव यत्पशुः (ऐतरेय ब्रा०)

(g) पशवो वै घानाः (गोपथ ब्रा०)

(h) हविर्हि पशवः (ऐतरेय ब्रा०)

(ii) दध्मिघ्धृत माशाः धनाः भवन्ति एतद् वै पपा रूपम तैत्तिरीय संहिता।

(fire as true symbolic substitutes of animosity being offered, killed and sacrificed.)

Taittiriya Samhitaa mentions the oblation of "PURODAASA" as symbol of animal meant for offering to the sacred Fire. ‘KAATHAKA SAMHITAA’ echoes the same idea in a bit changed language. 'Taittiriya', 'Tandya, 'Aitereya' and 'Shatapatha Brahmanas' say the same thing in their own elliptical and allegoric styles, with a little variation of expressions. This tussle continued but the protagonists of animal killing and meat offering never got the upper hand.

Time went on, so also the debate. It can be safely said that up to the time of sage ‘Yaska’ not a single ‘Yajna’ performance took place in which animals were killed and meat oblations poured into the Sacred Fire. It is noteworthy to record here that sage ‘Yaska’ has not included the key-root ‘*AALABHATE*’ (denoting killing of animals in ‘yajnas’) in the list of thirty-three roots conveying the sense of killing in his book Nighantu (II-19).

It has already been stated that ancient followers of vedism believed in and lived upon the ideal of friendliness for all living beings. They would kill animals in religious rituals seems impossible. The idea of pouring flesh oblations in the Sacred Fire of a ‘Yajna’, therefore, is of later and non vedic origin.

During vedic times, there existed great interdependence amongst men, animal and plants, resulting in complete harmony and mutual coordination. In such an atmosphere killing of animals for food and that too, in religious rites seems improbable and unacceptable.

A few extracts are given below from 'Atharva-veda', which show how greaty animals were needed, valued and venerated by ancient followers of Vedism.

(a) May Supreme being the creator endow us with necessary men, animals and plants, so that we may be able to obtain vigour from their milk and necessary medical juice from the herbs (vide XIX - 31 - 5).

(b) Wise men get milk from animals (like cows) medicinal juice from herbs and great speed from horses (vide VI - 27 - 3).

(c) Here I bring milk of cows and here I beget cereals and juice from plants (vide II-26-5).

(d) I mix together milk of the cows with equal quantity of 'ghee' (purified butter) which when blended give good taste and vigour (vide II - 26 - 4).

Some passages are taken from Sanskrit literature to demonstrate that animal sacrifice was not admissible in "Vedic Yajna" during those days:

(a) In pre-'Mahabharata' days, there was a king named Uparichara. He performed an 'Asva-medha Yajna', which had been conspicuously described as AHIMSRA (devoid of himsa). 'Himsa' means slaughter of animals. In the description of that 'Yajna', it is said: "No killing of animals took place in this Yajna" (vide Mahabharata, Shanti Parve Chapter 338).

(b) "Pious minded sage 'Manu' ordained that all rituals should be devoid of killing. People slaughter animals in 'Yajna' to satisfy their desire for meat eating" (vide Mahabharata Shanti Parva, Chapter 266).

(c) It is said, " 'Yajna' should be performed with the oblations of "aja" (he goat meat). But this interpretation is wrong. The word "aja" in this context means old seeds not fit for sprouting. Therefore, oblations of he-goat-meat should not be put into Sacred Fire, but instead of that, oblations of old seeds be poured in the sacred fire" (vide Mahabharata, Shanti Parva Chapter 337).

(d) “Evil doers commit slaughter of animals to satisfy their own desire for meat eating. They gain their object under the pretext of performing ‘Pitri-Yajna’ and ‘Bhuta-Yajna’ ” (vide Bhagavat-Puran Skanda 11, Chapter 5).

(e) “Those performers of “Yajnas” who kill animals while performing 'Yajna' are fools. They do not understand the true spirit of the Vedas” (vide Panca Tantra, Third Tantre, Second Tale)

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3

WHAT ARE 'ASVA MEDHA' AND 'GO MEDHA' NARA MEDHA ETC?

The question addressed here is- if animal killing was not prevalent in vedic times and meat offering in 'Yajna' is of later origin then, what was the concept of 'ASVA MEDHA', 'GO MEDHA' and 'NARA MEDHA' etc. mentioned in the scriptures?

An answer to this question is aptly summed up in the following passage of 'Satyartha Prakasha' by Svami Dayananda Sarasvati, the Vedic seer of modern times. It states: "No-where in scriptures it has been ordained to perform 'Yajna' with the flesh of Horse, cow or any other animal or man....

'ASVA MEDHA' comprises of: "Dispensation of justice to his subjects and propagation of education in his kingdom by the king and performance of 'Yajna' by pouring of oblations of ghee (purified butter) etc, in the Fire by the people.

'GOMEDHA' constitues of: 'Keeping pollution free all edibles, sense organs, atmosphere (rays etc.) and the earth'.

'NARAMEDHA' is cremation of human corpse in a proper form as prescribed in scriptures. (vide Satyartha Prakasha Chapter XI). The complete description of the 'NARAMEDHA' is given below:

"Dig a pit about 7½ feet long, 5½ feet broad at the top and 4½ feet deep. The pit should taper down so as to be one half of its top breadth at the bottom. Place sandal wood at leat 49 pounds in quantity and also wood of 'palash' tree." (Butea Fondoca). Take clarified butter equal in weight to the dead body and mix it with musk and a little of scented vermilion like thing called 'kesar' and also camphor etc. Place the dead body on it. Then sprinkle clarified butter filled in some container on the dead body all over and set the fire to it. No foul smell will spread by cremating corpse in the vedic way. (vide Shata Patha, Chapter XIII).

The definition of ‘ASVAMEDHA’, ‘GOMEDHA’ and ‘NARAMEDHA’ quoted above are not the outcome of Swami Dayananda’s thinking. They are logical expositions of various relevant dictums found in Brahmanas and vedangas.

The word ‘MEDHA’ according to ‘Shatapatha Brahramana’ (XIII-3-6-2) is “AAJYA” meaning fried butter ("Ghee")[1]. It conveys the sense of a ritual in which "ghee" is used in abundance.

Any thing which runs very fast to high achievement is ASVA (horse)[2]. According to Shatapatha Brahmana (XIII-1-6), RAASTRA[3] (nation and the national organisation) is Asva, hes high all animals. So does the national sentiment which catches up fast and sweeps over to its constituents at a great speed. Therefore, all measures conducive to the progress and development of a nation can be taken as a great 'Yajna' called ASVA MEDHA.

According to Shatapatha Brahmana (XIII-1-6-3) flaming of Fire in a ‘Yajna’ looks like a galloping bhite[4] horse. Pouring of ghee oblations in the fire inflames it further, which purifies the atmosphere. As the process is conducive to the well being of humanity, this act too can be taken as an ‘ASVAMEDHA’ at personal level.

According to Unadi-Kosa[5] (II-67) of Sage Panini, the word Go cannotes sense organs, atmosphere, rays (of the Sun etc.) and earth, and also by implication rituals cultivated on earth. All measures to keep these things and places pollution-free is a great ‘yajna’ called ‘Go-MEDHA’. Cremation of human corpse in a proper way to avoid pollution of air, water and soil is surely a great ‘yajna’ called ‘NARA MEDHA’. Disposal of corpse by throwing them in flowing water of rivers or oceans or burning them under the earth is considered bad and harmful to the society.

It is now clear that Vedic ‘yajna’ is an act of piety; it is no way connected with animal killing or meat-eating. However owing to perverted tastes of the people later on meat offering to the Sacred Fire became prevalent. (Perversion is what our western friends are pointing to as the normal Practice.

In Vedic Indox, Vol. II, (page 143), we find the following assertion:

“The usual food of the Vedic Indian as far as the flesh was concerned can be gathered from the list of sacrificial victims. What man ate, he presented to the God-that is the sheep, the goat and ox.”

What has been mentioned in the above quotation was not the Vedic tradition. Our friends (western thinkers) are looking in the for Vedas something which was not prevalent in Vedic times as meat offering in Vedic Yajna’s came into vogue much later.

The whole argument in this context hinges upon the interpretation of the word ‘AALABHATE’ which occurred in the Vedic hymns chanted in the ritual of vedic ‘yajna’, when animals were brought to the sacrificial alter. AALABHATE is a word that originally did not mean killing but was given connotation of killing during the 'sutra' period when the Vedic 'Yajnas' had become very much violently ritualistic. The primary sense of the word AALABHATE is PRAAPTI (to acquire etc.) as has been given in the 'dhatupatha' of sage Panini. In the sense of killing the word AALABHATE has not been used anywhere in the Vedas.

The word AALABHATE was pushed on the path of adopting to the sense the of killing by those scholars of ‘sutra’ literature, who mis-interpreted the root AALABHATE occurring in Chapter XXX of ‘Yajurveda’ in the sense of killing, though it had been used there in the sense of evil doers, such as ‘goghatis’ (cow-killers) for bringing them to book for punishment. Per chance this connotation fits in the context remarkably well.

(In some Vedic ‘Samhitas’, the word aalabhate has been used in place of root ‘han’ (meaning gati and himsa), which

besides giving the connotation of killing, also conveys the sense of 'gati'.) And ‘gati’ as all know includes in it the sense of PRAPTI (acquisition). If the word "aalabhate" is taken in the sense of acquisition, which in reality is its primary sense, the whole theory of meat offering in the Vedic ‘yajna’ falls down. This assertion of ours becomes all the more strengthened, when we find that in the ritual of vedic ‘yajnas’, there are two "Vedis" (altars), namely, ‘purva-vedi’ and ‘uttara-vedi’ and meat oblations are offered only in the ‘uttara-vedi’, while in the ‘purva-vedi’, the oblations offered comprise strictly of cereals (daanya). This clearly shows that the practice of pouring meat oblations in the ‘yajna's are of later origin.

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(1) " MEDHA VA AAJYAM" (Shatapath a Brahmana XIII-3-6-2).

(2) Etymologically "AASU GACCHATI it is 'ASVA'.

(3) "RAASTRAM, VAA 'ASVAMEDHA' (Shatapatha Brahman XIII-6-3)".

(4) "AGNI VAA 'Asvassvatah' "(Shatapatha Brahman III-6-2-5)

(5) PASURI NDRIYAM SUKHAN. (UNABI KOSA ii-67).

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4

THE ALABHATE CONTROVERSY

(‘AGNI-SOMIIYAM PASUM AALABHATE’)meaning he kills the animals meant for offering to ‘AGNI’ and ‘SOMA’ in this ‘Yajna’: Such like sentences are often found in Sutra-literature. Scholars well versed in performing ‘Yajna’ insist that in all such contexts the word ‘aalabhote’ invariably conveys the sense of killing. But the truth of the matter is that the root ‘aalabh’ does not mean killing. Sage Panini in his hatupatha has attributed only the sense acquisition to the root ‘labh’. Owing to some peculiar circumstances, the root labh started conveying the sense of killing. This change in the meaning of root ‘labh’ has been clearly reflected in Apte’s dictionary where the word ‘aalabham’ has been shown to mean taking hold of, seizing, touching, tearing off, killing especially an animal at a sacrifice. First three connotations are in line with Panini's hatupatha', and Monier Williams Dictionary but the next two reflect the changed meaning adopted during the later times.

Some scholars argue that the change in the meaning of the root ‘aalabh’ here has been brought in by the preposition ‘aa’ prefixed to it. But that is not the case. We see root ‘aababh’ used in the Vedas at very many places, and nowhere it reflects the sense of killing. (not even in Yaj. 30, 22)

In Atharva Veda (VII -109-7), we find the phrase “AKSAAN YAD BABHRUUN AALABHE”. Here root 'aalabh' gives the sense of acquisition (PRAAPTI), by touching. The phrase means I touch the brown dices. In case, it is insisted that root ‘aalabh’ here too conveys the sense of killing, then the phrase becomes quite senseless. How can the lifeless dices be killed?

Similarly in Yajurveda (XXIV-II), we have the quotation: “DHUUMRAAN VASANTAAYA AALABHATE, SVETAAN GRIISMAAYA, KRSNAAN VARSABHYO, ARUNAAN SARADE, PRSATO HEMANTAAYA, PISAMGAAN SISRAAYA.”

If we persist that the root ‘aalabh’ means killing then the translation of the mantra will be:

“Man should kill smoke coloured things in the spring, white in summer, black in rains, red in autumn, bulky in winter and reddish in dewy season.” This rendering does not convey any plausible idea to the readers.

But if we take the root ‘aalabh’ in the sense of acquisition (wearing), the whole mantra means not only intelligible but quite logical also. The translation of the mantra then will be: "Man should wear smoke colored clothes in spring, white in summer, black in rains, red in autumn, bulky in winter and reddish in dewy season.”

In Yajurveda (XXX – 22), we find the word ‘AALABHATE’ again. Here in mantras – 5 to 22 of this chapter, one hundred eighty four types of men have been mentioned and ‘aalabhate’ is the only verb with which they are connected. All these one hundred eighty four types of men are object to the verb ‘AALABHATA’. It is the responsibility of the king to look to the welfare and well-being of all these people.

This chapter deals with the general concerns of the king. There are many types of men amongst his subjects. He is to maintain discipline in them and for that he is to deal with them is many ways. For all these purposes, the king ‘aalabhate’ or comes in contact with them. In these eighteen mantras, not only the various types of men have been mentioned, but along with them the purposes for which the king requires them are also specified. The twenty second ‘mantra’ describes the situation as given below:

> “Come In contact with the following eight types of men – one tall, one short, one too stout, one too thin, one too white, one too black, one too bald, one too hairy, so should you do.”

The purport of this ‘mantra’ seems to point out that there are various kinds of people in the kingdom. There are good, better, best, bad, worse, and worst types of people with whom the king has to come in contact. Some are to be installed in high positions, others to be rewarded, still others to be patronized and for others welfare is to be assured. Not only

that the king has to keep some others under surveillance, some are to be fined and punished while others to be put in jail and the rest to be eliminated. For example, in the fifth mantra, we find: "*BRAHMANE BRAAHMANAM, KSATRAAYA RAAJANYMM MARUDBHYO VAISYAM, TAPASE SUUDRAM... AALABHATE*."

If we agree to give the sense of killing to root '*aalabh*' as the new "yaajnikas" insist, then the translation of this quotation will be: "The king aalabhate (kills) a Brahmana for the knowledge of the Vedas, the king "aalabhate" (kills) a 'ksatriya' prince for the safety of the kingdom, the king "aalabhate" kills a Vaisya for rearing the cattle and the king aalabhate (kills) a Suudra for hard labour". This sentence does not convey any plausible meaning. The sense of killing does not fit in this context.

But on the other hand, if we take the root "aalabh" in the sense of meaning or dealing into, the whole context becomes quite intelligible. Then the translation of this quotation will be: the king "aalabhate " (comes in contact with a Brahmana for gaining knowledge of the Vedas, a "Ksatriya" prince for the safety of his kingdom, a "Vaisya" for rearing cattle in NIGHANTU (II-19), the long list of thirty three roots conveying the sense of killing does not include root "aalabh" in it.

In order to find out how the root 'aalabh' adopted the sense of killing instead of acquisition attributed to it by sage Panini we have to again refer to Chapter XXX of the 'yajurveda'. There in its eighteenth mantra, we find the line- "ANTAKAAYA GO-GHAATAM... AALABHATE" (occcurring in the twenty second mantra of this Chapter). Obviously, the sentence "antakaaya goghaatam... aalabhate" means, the king ("aalabhate") seizers 'go-ghaatam' (for end of cow killing). Here the word 'aalabhate' conveys two senses at a time– one the sense of acquisition and the other, the sense of ending. In due course of time, the former-the sense, of acquisition-faded away, and the latter sense-the sense of killing became prominent.

The word "aalabhate" thus acquired the sense of killing because the main purpose of the word "aalabhate" is killing

the evil-doer (cow killer) and not acquiring him. In this whole chapter, wherever "aalabhate" (capturing) of bad characters is denoted, its primary sense of acquisition gets diluted, becomes secondary and a new sense of killing becomes its primary sense.

Another process which was simultaneously going on also helped this change of meaning in the root "aalabh". In Maitrayani Samhitaa (I-5-9) we find the sentence: "VATSAM AALABHATE VATSA NIKAAN TAAH HI PASAVAH". A similar type of reading is mentioned in KAATHAKA SAMHITAA as "VATSAM PARAA HANTI VATS-NIKAANTAH HI PASAVAH". Here, in a context where the author of "Maitrayani Samhitaa" used root "aalabh" in a similar context, the author of 'Kaathaka' SAMHITAA used root Paraa-han. There is nothing astonishing or wrong in it. While root labh has its meaning as 'praapti' (acquisition), root 'han' also denotes 'gati', which includes in it praapti (acquisition) also. Such like usages are valid only if connotation of "praapti" of root "han" is taken into consideration and its other sense, i.e. the sense of killing is made to fade away.

These are passages in GRHYA AND DHARMA SUUTRAS where root AALABH has been used in the sense of touching and not killing as follows:

(a) PARASKARA GRHYA SUUTRA while describing a marriage ceremony says: " ... DAKSINAM AMSAM ADHI HRDAYAM ALABHATE", [The bride groom touches (aalabhate) bride's heart from over her right shoulder.]

(b) ASVALAYANA GRHYA SUUTRA (I-15-1), while describing Jatakarma Samskara says: "KUMARAM JAATAM PURAA ANAYAIR AALAMBHANAAT SARPI-MADHUNI HIRANYA-NIKAYAM PRAASAYETA" (Before any body touches 'AALABHANAAT' the newly born child, he should be made to taste mixture of 'ghee' and honey with a golden touch.)

(c) GOBHILA GRHYA SUTRA (II-7-21), While describing Jata Karma Samskara says: ATA URDHAM ASMAA-LAMBHANAM AADASARAA TRAAT. [After this for full ten days touching 'ASAMAALAMBHANAM' is forbidder] Pt. Satyavrata Saamasrami translates the word ASMAALAMBHHNAM as ASPARSANAM (non-touching).

(d) APASTAMBHA DHARMA SUUTRA (question 2, patal 3, part 3, suutra 3,) says: "Having touched "aalabhya" (hair), part of the body, clothes, one should wash his hands with water." Acharya Ubata commenting on this very context renders 'aalabhya' as "sprstva" (having touched).

(e) Subodhani Tika commenting on Munansa Darsan (II-3-17) declares, "aalambha" as "sparsa" meaning touching [Sparsa (catching) of calf for bringing him near the cow is called "aalambha"].

(f) In "Yajurveda" (XXXIV-49), a word "aanvaalebhire is used. Acharya Ubata it takes this word derived from root 'labh' "preceded by prefix 'anu' and translates it as (touches) in his commentary. Acharya Mahidhar also agrees with Acharya Ubata in his commentary. The whole controversy about AALABHATE can be further highlighted and concluded with the help of the following points.

(1) The primary sense of root 'Aalabh' (AA+LABH) is 'praapti' (acquisition). Sage Panini has attributed to root 'labh' the sense of 'prapti'. prefix 'AA' in no way affects the meaning of root 'labh.'

(2) In Vedas, root 'labh' wherever occurs conveys the sense of 'praapti' even though it is preceded by preposition 'AA'. No where root 'labh' gives the sense of killing in the four 'Samhitas'.

(3) Upto the time of sage Yaska root 'aalabh' had gathered no connotation of killing around it. It should be kept in mind that sage Yaska has not included root 'aalabh' in his long list of thirty three roots conveying the sense of killing in Nighantu (II - 19).

(4) Root 'aalabh' started gathering the sense of killing during late 'suutra' times and the source of this tendency lies in the misinterpretation of passages of Chapter XXX of 'Yajurveda', where the king is required to come in contact with "aalabate" (evil doers) of his kingdom for bringing them to book.

(5) In later works we find the germs of this tendency growing further. In one context, the root ‘aalabh’ is used in one ‘Samhita’; in a similar cantext in another 'Samhita', it has been replaced by root ‘han’.

(6) When during ‘Sutra’ times, Vedic ‘yajnas’ became prevalent the perverted taste of the people pressed for meat offering for the Sacred Fire. At that time ‘aalabhate’ too was forced to adopt the sense of killing.

If root ‘aalabhate’ is taken in its original sense of acquisition (‘praapti’), then the theory of meat- offering in Vedic ‘Yajnas’ falls to the ground. The claim of western thinkers that ancient followers of Vedism were meat-eaters automatically becomes purely arbitrary.

Chapter XIX of ‘Charaka Samhita’, which deals with treatment of diseases throws more light on the further development of ‘Yajna’:

(1) Animals were not killed in “Yajnas” in those days. They were brought to the place where ‘Yajna’ was being conducted for show and to give them a place of honour.

(2) Long after the completion of DAKSA ‘YAJNA’, Manu's decendants MARISYANA, NABHAKA, IKSVAAKU and KUVIDACARY performed ‘Yajna’. In this ‘Yajna’ the priests considering human animosity as animal instinct performed PROKASANA ceremony of the animals by encircling them with the drops of water falling from human hand full of water.

(3) This PROKSANA ceremony in a way made animals a part of ‘Yajna’ henceforth.

Then after a very long time, when king PRSADHRA started to perform a long session ‘Yajna’,the required number of animals, were not available in the ritual. In order to complete the full quota, cows were also brought to the place of ‘Yajna’. When the moment for ‘aalambhana’ of animal arrived, these cows were also killed. Thus, started the killing of cow in the ‘Yajna’.

Cow-killing created a great hue and cry in the country. People in general reacted violently to this ignoble happening. Cow meat proved too heavy for the digestion of those who took it. Diarrhea epidemic broke out and continued in the country for long time.

What emerges from this discussion is this : A murder in the cathedral does not vitiate, nor does it falsity the commandment : THOU SHALT NOT KILL. The cause of history is paved with the violence of values, but that violence does not define the values. Values are defined in inviolable words of their own. Swami Dayanand said in Satyartha Prakash (ch. 7) : "There is no history in the Vedas. Vedas are pure knowledge expressed in pure scientific language". Vedas should be interpreted on the pure scientific principles of Nirukta, Nighantu and Swami Dayanand's Commentary on the Vedas and his introduction to it. No historical development of meaning can be forced back on words used at a time when history had hardly begun. Therefore take the original words in their original sense, in no other. The Ganga at Gangotri is different it is not the same at Ganga Ghat. Go to Gomukh if you really love it, rest of the journey is compromise.

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EXAMPLES, WHERE WESTERNS OFTEN FALTER

The root 'han' has many connotations, besides the popular one 'himsa' (killing). According to sage Panini, the great grammarian, the root 'han' also means:

GATI – (to go, to send, to transmit etc.)

JNAANA – (to know, to understand, to become acquainted with etc.)

PRAAPTI – (to get, to obtain, to acquire, to altiain etc.)

According to others (mostly lexicographers), the root 'han' is also used in the following senses:

(a) To multiply (as in the word ?kkr% GHAATAH) meaning multiplication.

(b) To guard (as in the word gLr?k% HASTAGHNAH) meaning hand guard used by tailors.

(c) To raise (as in the quotation rjx[kj TURAGA-KHUR-HATASTATHA HI RENUH meaning dust raised by the hoof of the horse (vide ABHIJNANA SAKUNTALAM).

(d) To beat, to hurt etc.

(e) To give up, to abandon etc.

(f) To obstruct.

(g) To avert.

Unfortunately the Western thinkers are generally inclined to interpret root 'han' only in the sense of killing. As a result of this tendency, many times, they find themselves caught in awkward stituations.

In Vedic Index vol. II, page 145, we find the following assertion: "The marriage ceremony was accompanied by the slaying of oxen clearly for food". The following Mantra of Rgveda has been mentioned in support of this assertion:

SURYAAYAA VAHATU PRAAGAAT
SAVITAA YAMAVAASRJAT

AGHAASU HANYANTE GAAVO-
ARJUNYOH PARYUHYATE
(Rg Veda X-85- 13).

This mantra contains the word 'hanyante', a conjugated form of root 'han'. It also contains the word 'gaavah', which ordinarily means cows. When a western scholar finds these two words, ('hanyante'[2] 'gaavrah') together, he feels that they signify killing of cows. And, at the end of the mantra, when he sees the word 'paryuhyate', which denotes that a marriage is being described, the western scholar at once jumps to the conclusion that this is a marriage ceremony in which cows are killed obviously for food. That is his irresistible immediate reaction, for he takes root 'han' in the sense of killing only. They overlook the fact that it is a marriage not of two human beings, but a physical phenomenon figuratively described as a marriage, where there are no cows for killing, but only rays of the sun being sent forth.

SUURYAA is SAVITAA'S daughter and SAVITAA is Sun as all know. Therefore, SUURYAA being Sun's daughter signifies Sun's light or Sun's rays or in a way Sun's radiance. This mantra figuratively describes the marriage of SUURYAA, the daughter of SAVITAA (the Sun) with MOON mentioned in 'Yajurveda' (XVIII-40), where it is said, SUSUMNA (meaning very beautiful and pleasant) the radiance of Sun falls on the MOON, who receives it and imbibes its rays. its astralism meaning star-like twinkling glow) and the rays present in the atmosphere are full of lustre." Marriage here means union of Sun's radiance with moon in the process of transmission.

No doubt the word gaavah connotes cows, but it also means so many other things in Sanskrit. According to Panini's Unadi-Kosa (II-67), the word, gaavah connotes cows, sense organs, happiness rays, VAJRA (an armament), moon, earth, arrows and water. Out of these connotations, "rays" remarkably fits in the context of the 'mantra'. Also, word 'hanyante' no doubt, gives the sense of "were killed", but also means "were sent" This interpretation fits well in the context.

It may also be noted here that Dr. Wilson in his translation of this 'mantra' has rendered words 'hanyante'

gaavah' as "cows were whipped. He does not stick to the sense of killing so far as the root 'han' is concerned. He has rendered the root in the sense "beating."

The English translation of this 'mantra' is given below along with Vedic thought:

Western version: Lord 'Savitaa' sent forth with great pomp and show the dowry of SUURYAA which went forth in advance. On that occasion during Maghav (planet), cows were killed and later on during 'Arjuni' (planet), the marriage took place.

Vedic version: Lord Savitaa (Sun) sent forth with great pomp and show the dowry of his daughter SUURYAA which went forth in advance. On that occasion during 'Magha' (Planet), were sent rays and later on during 'Arjuni', the marriage of SUURYAA with moon took place.

The readers can see for themselves, how 'arbitrarily', non-vegetarianism has been made to enter into a Veda mantra where no trace of it exists. How can rays be killed? However they can be sent forth.

Explain the meaning of the word GO in Nirukta (II-5-4), sage 'Yaska' the greatest etymologist of his times comments upon the quotation- "GOBHIH SRINIITA MATSARAM" (Rg-veda IX-46-4) as follows: He took the word MATSARAM as a herb known as SOMA and rendered the quotation as: "he cooked SOMA (herb) with cow." Finding this rendering not very clear, the sage opined that this quotation in reality meant, "he cooked Soma (herb) with cow's milk." During the discussion, he remarked that there were passages in the Vedas where word 'Go' is used in the sense of its derivatives, such as cow-milk, cow-skin, cow-phlegm, cow-tendon and also, bow-string and arrow (made of any part of cows body).

The sage Yaska remark's in this context are: "ATHAAPI ASYAAM TAADDHITENA KRTSNAVAN NIGAMAA BHAVANTI–GO BHIH SRII NIITA MATSARAM IT PAYASAH". In simple, these remarks imply: "Vedic language has a genius of using word in the sense of a part of the object for which it is generally used."

We find this opinion of sage 'Yaska' echoed in Vedic Index, too, by a conscientious contributor as given below.

"The term 'GO' is often applied to express the products of the cows. This frequently means the milk, but rarely the flesh of the animal. In many passages, it means leather used as a bow string or a sling or thongs to fasten parts of the chariot or reins or lash of the whip." (vide Vedic Index, vol II. page 237)

But Western scholars often overlook this important maxim of the Vedic interpretation and land themselves in awkward situations.

In vedic Index, vol II. page 147, we find the following assertion:

"The ritual of cremation of the dead required the slaughter of a cow as an essential part, the flesh being used to envelop the dead body."

In support of this assertion the following mantra of the Rg-Veda is mentioned:

AGNERVARMA PARI GOBHIRVYAYASVA
SAM PRORNUSVA PIIVASAAMEDASAACA
NETTVAA DHRU SNURHARASAA JARIHARSAANO
DADHRIGVI DHAKSY ANPARY ANGKHYATE

(Rg-Veda X-16-7).

Below is given the English translation of this 'mantra' which also describes the process of cremation:

"Save (keep up burning) the flames by means of fried butter (gobhih). Cover them with thick fat in the right manner. By doing so the bright, dead cow body in the right manner. By doing so the bright, powerful, rejoicing and (all) consuming fire will not engulf you and destroy you."

English rendering of the word 'Go' (GOBHIH) occurring in the 'mantra' is the bone of contention here. Western scholars interpret the word 'GO' as dead body of the slaughtered cow.

In their opinion, slaughtered cows used to be placed over the corpse of the diceased persons for enveloping them, so that the fire of the pyre could he kept burning for a long time. But in reality, the word 'GOBHIH' in the 'mantra' signifies cow's 'ghee' (purified butter), which was a better agent to achieve this end. Here the word 'GOBHIH' connotes 'ghee' made from cow milk. It is a fit example of 'GO' a KRTSNA form of word GO (cow) being used in the sense of its 'ANVAG' form (GO-GHRTA), that is purified/ clarified butter prepared from the milk of cows.

The word 'ghyo' in present day Punjabi dialect is a 'Krtsna' from of word 'GO' (cow), conveying the sense of 'anvag' form (cow's fried butter). The word 'GO' by the passage of time has become 'ghyo' in modern Punjabi language.

It is for readers to decide what fits better in the context of the 'mantra'. Whether a slaughtered cow is more helpful in keeping the flames of the pyre burning or the cow's ghee (purified butter). Surely, the purified butter of the cow is more helpful in burning and consuming the dead body of the diceased man. The callousness shown by Western scholars in not taking due note of the genius of Vedic language of using primary word 'GO' in the sense of its derivatives 'GHEE' has been the basic maxim on which the theory that "ancient followers of Vedism were non-vegetarian" has been propped and built upon.

In ancient times it was usual to offer 'Madhuparka' to a guest when he visited a household. Ordinarily, it used to be curd mixed with honey. Later on it was felt that offering to a guest should be more wholesome and sumptuous. Besides honey mixed with a liquid such as curd or milk or any other drink, it must also include some solid edible. This is why in 'Sutra' literature of later days, we find the mention of an aphorism "NA-AMAAMSO MADHUPARKO BHAVATI" which was taken to mean that 'Madhuparka' without meat was invalid.

In those days the word 'mamsa' beside meat also conveyed the sense of fleshy parts of fruits etc. Apte in his dictionary has supported this view. In these days

this fleshy part of fruits and vegetable is called “gudda” in Hindi language. Thus 'Madhuparka' beside curd and honey should also include some edible prepared from fleshy fruits and vegetables in order to satisfy the guests’ taste and hunger[1]. Later on, when owing to perverted taste people took to meat eating, this aphorism was also given a twist. It then meant that “Madhuparka” could not be valid without including meat in it.

Similar was the fate of another aphorism GOGHNA ATITHIH of 'Sutra' period. This maxim originally had nothing to do with meat-eating. The later part of the word ‘GO-GHANA’ is derived from, root ‘han’ but root ‘han’ here does not convey the sense of killing. It is used here in the sense of ‘PRAAPTI’ meaning to acquire, thus ‘GOGHNA ATITHIH’ meant an eminent guest who deserved to be offered gift of cows when he visited a household. It never meant a guest on whose arrival the killing of cow was essential. This interpretation of that aphorism is of late times. It is true that later on when meat-eating became prevalent, the aphorism 'GOGHNA ATITHIH' too used to be interpreted as meat-eating. It then, meant a guest of honour on whose arrival cows were killed for performing ‘Madhupark’ ceremony. In Uttara-Rama-charitam a drama written much later, we find the mention of ‘samaamsa-Madhuparka’ on the arrival of sage Valamiki.

Compilers of Vedic Index have-vainly tried to see this meat-mixed ‘Madhuparka’ traditions in the following mantra of the Rgveda:

SAADHVARYÃA ATITHINIRISIRAH
SPARHAH SUVARNA ANAVADYARUPAH
BRHASPATIH PARVATEBHYOH VITURYA
NIRGA UPE YAVAMIVA STHIVI BHYAH
(Rg Veda X-68-3).

Our western friends have wrongly interpreted this ‘mantra’ and the word ATITHINII as “slaying cows for the guests’. This rendering is based on the assumption that the word ATITHINII being an adjective conveys the sense for the ATITAHI implying that they were for sacrificial offering for the ATITHII. But this assumption is quite baseless. There is no word in the ‘mantra’ which may be construed to convey the sense of slaying the cow for the offering of the ATITHI. Professor Griffith has rightly interpreted the word ATITHINII as “wandering cows” in his translation of this mantra. For the benefit of the readers, Professor Griffiths translation is given below:

“Brihaspati has won them from the mountains, strewed down like barley out of the winnowing baskets, the vigorous wandering cows, who aid the Pious, desired by all of blameless form well coloured.”

It is noteworthy that Dr. Griffith’s translation does not provide any place for viewing meat-mixed-'Madhuparka' offering to the guests, which the compilers of the vedic Index wanted to see in the Vedas. Western notion that on the arrival of a guest, it was customary for the host to welcome them with meat-mixed ‘Madhuparka’ offering is a misnomer. Nowhere it has been ordained in the Vedas. The word ‘Madhuparka’ occurs only once in the Vedas. The relevant portion of the Atharva veda (X-3-21) is given below for readers benefit:

“YATHAA YASAH SOMAPIITHE
MADHUPARKE YATHAA, YASAH”

The fame which is in SOMAPIITHE and the fame which is in MADHUPARKA, may that fame also come to me].

This quotation too in no way provides any scope for viewing meat-mixed madhuparka or non-vegetarianism of any kind in the vedas which our western friends wanted to see in the Vedas. The whole question here revolves around the interpretation of the word ATITHINII Professor Griffith translated this word as ‘wandering cows’.

His translation is in fine with the thinking of shri V. S. Apte who is his dictionary has given the meaning of the word vfrfFk as a traveller. A traveller is he who travesl and does not stay for a long time at one place. Sage Manu in his 'smriti (III-103) says: ^vfuR; fg fLFkrk ;LekRrLekr vfrfFk # Pir*M [an vfrfFk is called vfrfFk because the duration of his stay at a place is vfuR; (not for a long time)], such also was the condition of these cows. They were roaming in the mountains and as such did not stay too long at a place. They were not demonstrated at all. The rendering of the vfrfFkuh as slaying cows for the guest' betrays the great pressure for seeming "cow killing in the Vedas". weighing on the minds of the compilers of Vedic Index.

It is note worthy that Griffith's translation does not provide any plea for viewing meat-mixed Madhuparka offering to the guests, which the compiler of the Vedic Index wanted to see in the Vedas.

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1 There is as pulse known as ekg in the north west portion of India. Dishes prepared from this pulse are very tasty and energizing. The word ekg obviously is viHk form of word ekg and is as such a vegetarian (non-meat) but fleshy cereal. This fact also strengthans this view.

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BRAHMANA'S GAU NOT COW

In Sanskrit language the word GAU conveys very many connotations. Here, sage Panini is shown as pan, UNADI KOSA as UND, Nighantu as Nig., sage Yaska as yask, Acharya Halayudhe as Hal, the author of ABHIIDHAANA RATNA-MALA and his lexcon as A. R. M. The connotations of the word GAU are tabled below:

(1) Cow (the animal)	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
	(b)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-1)]
	(c)	[Hal. ARM (Lexicon)]
(2) Earth (land)	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
	(b)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-1)]
	(c)	[Hal. vide ARM (Lexicon)]
(3) SPEECH	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
	(b)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-11)]
	(c)	[Hal. vide ARM (Lexicon)]
(4) RAY	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
	(b)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-5)]
	(c)	[Hal. vide ARM (Lexicon)]
(5) VAJRA (thunder-bold)	(a)	[Pan. vide und. (II-67)]
	(b)	[Hal. vide ARM (Lexicon)]
(6) ARROW	(a)	[Yask vide Nirukta (II-5-4)]
	(b)	[Hal. ARM (Lexicon)]
(7) WATER	(a)	[Pan. vide Nig. (II-67)]
	(b)	[Hal. vide ARM (Lexicon)]
(8) SENSE ORGAN	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
(9) MOON	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
(10) HAPPINESS	(a)	[Pan. vide Und. (II-67)]
(11) CELESTIAL REGION (Dyau)	(a)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-4)]
(12) SUN	(a)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-4)]
(13) REIN (RASMI)	(a)	[Yask. vide Nig (I-5)]

(14) PRAISER (STOTAA) (a) [Yask. vide Nig (III-16)]
(15) DIRECTION (a) [Hal., vide ARM (lexicon)]
(16) SIGHT (a) [Hal., vide ARM (lexicon)]
(17) HEAVEN (SVARGA) (a) [Hal., vide ARM (lexicon)]

'Atharvaveda' Book V (hymns 18 & 19), revolve around the concept of 'Brahmagavi'. Brahmagavi means Brahmana's 'GAU', but Western scholars translate it as Brahmana's Cow. As shown above, the word GAU conveys very many connotations. But it stands for speech, landed property and cow collectively in this context.

Brahmana is the mind of the society. As such, he welds a great influence on the masses. His well-being is very dear to the people. Any harm done to him destroys the wrong doer in the end. Spontaneous public sympathy settles scores on his behalf and when he needs the divine comes to his succour.

'BRAHMANA'S GAU' is ANAADYAA, not to be devoured, for it is not for eating (ATTAVE), as has been desired in the very first 'Mantra' of the 18th hymn. The word ANAADYAA is anti-thesis of the word AADYAA, which has been derived from root 'ad' (bhaksane is to eat). This root 'ad' (bhaksane) conveying the sense of eating had deluded the western. They were made to take a wrong track in thinking.

BRAHMANA'S GAU cannot be eaten implies that NON-BRAHMANA'S GAU can be eaten. This implication of BRAHMANA'S GAU being in line with their preconceived notion of cow killing and meat-eating in the Vedas" charmed them. They were influenced and were allured to translate the word 'gau' as cow and root 'ad' as eating. For them Brahanana's 'gau' is 'BRAHMANA'S COW', exclusive of any other connotation the word gau may have in Sanskrit language for this very reason.

No doubt, the primary sense of root 'ad' is eating (putting into the mouth, chewing and swallowing). But, that is not the only sense in which this root is used Root 'ad' besides eating also connotes- to devour, to destroy and to waste away. In these hymns, root 'ad' has been used in the sense of wasting away by forfeiting, expropriating and suppressing etc.

The expression BRAHMANA'S GAU is ANAADYAA per force conspicuously sparks forth that BRAHMANA'S GAU (that is his speech) should not be suppressed, for, BRAHMANA'S most important assets is his speech. The other two implications of root ‘ad’, namely, forfeiting and expropriating though they exist here, but not very prominently.

The central point of this hymn is to warn the executive authority, be it a king or an elected president or a despotic dictator that he should not try to suppress a true Brahmana (a well wisher of the people) by forfeiting his liquid assets (cows etc.) or expropriating his landed assets, house, etc. or denying him the freedom of speech.

In case the advice that Brahmana's Gau is not to be eaten is a serman, it is for one and all. There is nothing special in it for the king to take note of. The main purpose of these hymns then becomes diluted and to that extent infructuous. There is no plausible answer to the question as to why their hymns have been addressed to the king if he is not specially concerned with them. Let us ponder on the word ‘NRPATE’ in ‘mantra’ one, the word RAJANYA in ‘mantra three’ and again the word NRPATE in ‘mantra’ fifteen of hymn eighteen. All these words are in vocative case, singular signifying that kingship is called upon to fulfil a duty which they would actually rise up to do. Those who translate have no right to give a negative twist to the meaning of the original text in rendering. Western thinkers have overlooked the fact that the word ‘gau’ besides conveying the sense of cow has many other connotations.

Our main objection to this rendering is that it altogether negates the 8th & 9th Mantra of hymn 18th, where it has been elaborated how the Brahmana reacts when his speech is supressed, view his detailed weaponry and vividly describes methodology for destroying the wrong–doers. For readers' benefit, the English tranlation is given below:

> “His tongue becomes string of the bow, his voice the slick of the arrow, his teeth sharpened with austerity and hardships perfects the arrows. With these arrow, the true Brahmana stretching the bow of internal strength and celestial powers pierces the perpetrators (8th verse).

The series of shafts which armed the Brahmana with sharp arrows and deadly weapons never fail. They pursuing the foe with austerity and fiery anger pierce him even from a distance.

Our Western friends can go through the text of this hymn in the light of this defective rendering and can get away with this shadowy perception. However it is difficult for them to catch its underlying spirit and rejoice with its inner soul.

Let our reader also enjoy the poetic description of the invincible power of Brahmana's speech given in the verse of the 19th hymn, which is as follows:

" ...assuming as if eight-footed, four eyed, four-eared, four jawed two faced, two lunged statue, the Brahmana's gau (speech) shatters down the kingdom of the king who does wrong to the Brahman".

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7

OTHER PLACES WHERE WESTERNER'S FALTER

In Sanskrit language, root 'pac' is primarily used in the sense of cooking. But many a time, it also gives the sense of ripening or maturing as “Sasyamiva martyah pacyate” (Katho panisad I-1-6) meaning "a mortal matures like corn”. And also “kalah pacati bhutani” (Maitri–Upanisad I-15) meaning “time ripens all beings.”

In Rgveda (I-164-43), there occurs a quotation: “UKSAANAM PRY’SNIM APACANTA VIRAH”. The word ‘apacanta’ here is a conjugated form of root “pac”. In this quotation, ‘root’ "pac" is used in the sense of ripening. But Western thinkers generally take it in the sense of cooking. Below is given the text of the Veda-Mantra:

SAKAMAYAM DHUMAM ARADAPASYAM
VISŪVATA PARA ENAVARENA
UKSANAN PRYSNIM APACANTA VIRAH
TANI DHARRUANI PRATHAMANI / ASANI/

Dr. Whitney has translated word UKSAANAM as ‘OX’ and word PRYSNIM as ‘spotted’. He has translated verb ‘apacanta’ as ‘cooked’. All the three word-renderings in a way seem to be correct. But the translation as a whole does not convey any plausible meaning to the readers. While translating verb ‘apacanta’ he has taken root "pac" in the sense of cooking, which has given the ‘mantra’ OX-killing odor.

Dr. Griffith too has translated this ‘mantra’ as follows:

“I saw from far away the smoke of fuel with spires that rose one high over that beneath it. The mighty have dressed the spotted bullock. These were the customs in the days aforetime.”

Dr. Griffith has translated word UKSAANAM as ‘bullock’ and word PR’SNIM as spotted. He has translated verb ‘apaanta’ as dressed. All the three word renderings appear to be correct.

But the translation as a whole does not convey any plausible meaning to the readers. It is note worthy here that Griffiths' translation does not smack of OX-cooking for he has taken the root 'pac' in the sense of dressing (making better looking). The text of Rg-Veda (I-164-43) and of Atharvaveda (IX-10-25) are identical. Dr. Griffith in his translation of AtharvaVeda has rendered the quotation UKSANAM PR'SNIM APACANTAH as "cooked and dressed, the spotted bullock," While translating the verb 'apacanta', he has changed his previous rendering (figuring in his translation of Rg-veda) from "dressed" to "cooked and dressed". Obviously, he felt compelled to do so under pressure of western pre conceived ideas of ox-killing in the Veda, which must have gripped him at that time.

Western thinkers while translating Vedic texts do not care to take into account the Vedic perspective. Their renderings, therefore, are subjective, biased and therefore not trustworthy.

'Devata' (subject matter) of this hymn is 'visvedavah'. Henekit is clear that this mantra deals with one of the Vedic 'devatas' such as 'agni', 'vaye', 'surya' etc. Here evidently brahmancarya – 'Agni' has been eulogized. Brahmanaarya – "Agni" means Fire of Agnihotra a ritual which is obligatory for every student to perform twice a day. 'Agni' here also means the inner vigour of the students, which manifests itself in the shape of great eagerness for the knowledge. Its smoke is the confusion, which arises in the minds of the students about the subjects to be studied. Knowledge being vast and varied of so many subjects makes it difficult to decide their choice. Instead of keeping this aspect into focus while translating the vedic 'mantras' western thinkers crave for finding out ox-killing and meat-eating in the Vedas, given pre-conceived ideas. This is why they pait to see sage 'Yaska' has written in Nurukta (XII-9-1) namely:

"UKSANAH UKSATER VVDHI KARMANAH, UKSANTI UDAKANA VA", Meaning the word UKSANTI is derived from root "UKSA" to grow ,i.e., they grow with waters". Here Uksan means clouds, which look like a bull or oxen in the sky ("PR'SNIM" means sky) and grow with water vapours present in the atmosphere.

This word PR’SNI no doubt is given the sense of “spotted,” but it also means sky or atmosphere according to Apte’s dictionary. The word VIRAH means heroes of intellect. The root “pac” in the word ‘apacanta’ does not give the sense of cooking. It means ripening the knowledge of the heroes of interest. The word SAKAMAYAM is derived from root ‘SAK’ meaning to be able or to be competent to effect and therefore, means very powerful. It has nothing to do with dung or fuel as pointed out by Dr. Whitney or Dr. Griffith.

Below is given the English version of the mantra reflecting vedic thoughts.

“I have witnessed AARAAT from very near ‘DHUUMAM’ (the powerful smoke of fire of Brahmacharya APASYAM SAKAMAYAM which is very powerful (VISUUVATAA PARA ENA AVARENA), pervading far and wide. (VIIRAAH) learned persons (APACANTA) ripened their knowledge of space PRSNIM and clouds UKSAANAM, (TAANI DHARMA NI PRATHAMAANI AASAN). These observance of brahmacharya etc.] were the primary obligations for all.

In Rg-veda, the following mantra occurs:

m{.kk fg e ipn'k lkd ipfUr fo'kfre
mrkgenfe ihu bnek d{kh i.kfUr fo'oL;kfnUæ mÙkj%

(Rg X-86-14)

Our western scholars friends translate it the following way:

Indra's utterance: (some priests asked by INDRAANII my wife got together put) and PACHANTI (cooked) fifteen to twenty UKSANAH (bulls) which I ate and they PRNANTI (expanded) on UBHAU KUKSAU (both sides) TASMAT (on this account), I have become so (fattay).

‘Indra’ is not God ‘Indra’ here. Indriyas here is the master of indriyas (sense organs), which is soul. UKSANAH, too are not bulls. They are various parts, organs, limbs and faculties which grow and make embodied soul more formidable.

In this ‘mantra’, there are five PRANAS or vital airs. These five vital airs when a man has to fight an enemy his ‘pranas’ turn themselves into five rudras and along with five other faculties of head and heart change themselves into ten invincible ‘Rudras’, and twenty motor organs which make the enemies to weep and [ten nimble], fingers of hand, and feet have been referred as UKSANAH.

Pacati, here is not cooking. Root "pac" here connotes maturing, i.e. becoming more formidable. And admi too does not connote eating. It gives the sense of being benefited.

Thus, this mantra means:

“My m{.k% [five 'pranas' ten rudras and twenty fingers of hand & feet]” are developed, made more formidable and with these I intended to be much benefited from. These m{.k% have helped me to up more flesh on both sides of my body and made me fatty all over. In spite of all this, spiritual power is still superior. It has its own charm.

VRSABHAM

Like UKSANAH, which the western scholars translate as ‘ox’, there is another word VRSABHAM which is generally rendered by them as BULLOCK. The word VRSABHAM along with controversial root “pac” occurs in Rg-Veda (X-28-3). Western scholars in order to prove animal killing argue that meat offering was served in Vedic times. The Veda mantra quoted by them is as follows:

ADRINAA TE MANDINA INDRA TUUYAANT,
SUNVANTI SOMAAN PIVASI TVAMESAAM,
PACANTI TE VRSABAAN ATSI TESAAM,
PRKSENA YANMAGHAVAN HUUYAMAANAH.

The western scholars translate this Mantra on the followig lines:

“Oh Indra when for acquiring cereals, “Yajna” is performed, Yajamans TUYAAN hastily prepared (SOMA) & offered it to you which (PIVASI TVAM ENAM) you drink.

At that time, the priests cook ox-meat, you eat it."

While translating this 'mantra' Western scholars forget what sage 'Yaska' in NIRUKTA (IX-22-1) explaining the etymology of word VRSABHA says:

VRSABHAM ATIVRHATI RETA ITII VAA [meaning one who increases the seed (semen) very much such a man obviously must be very virile (brave).

Root "pac" ip in this mantra does not cannote cooking. It gives the sense of maturing that is making these VRSABHA more formidable. In this connection Durgacharya remarks while commenting on NIRUKTA (VI-16-4) about the word PACATAH are noteworthy. He says: "PACATAH PAKVAH ITI ARTHA" meaning the word PACATAH gives the sense of maturing. Not only that, it denotes still higher quality. Also PIVASI TVAM does no mean you drink it. But these two words give sense of "with your approval". Again the word SUNVANTI SOMAAN does not mean 'prepare Soma,' but connotes select brave people. The word INDRA does, not mean God Indra it connotes a king.

Below is given the translation of the Mantra reflecting Vedic thougth.

VEDIC VISION

> "Oh king, when men of your confidence, after due inquiry by trustworthy persons, who never faild in tasks allowed to them selected from cadres of brave people, with your approval and later on trained them and turned them into formidable corps, thus honoured obeyed you enjoyed prestige and their loyalty."

Thus, the above pages convey a clear message that vedic texts if properly analysed do not demonstrate that the ancient followers of Vedas were non-vegetarians. However, a twist had been given when western thinkers started analysing these works of Vedic literature.
This twirst was corrected and interpretation brought back on the right lines by Swami Dayanand in the Sayaly tradition of Brahma, Jaimini, Yasha and Pamimi

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